

ANNMARIE O'CONNELL

Some hours are larger

than others when I reach over
to close my mother's blue robe
sickness swallowing her hard
& I do this all clumsily
with scabs on my knees, thin eyelids
I'm a little terrible
this is all like seeing myself
a junkie
even when my son came out of me
I couldn't stop for good
until the second one
snipped my strings
a puppet rolling around
in the dusty pile of my life
& now the warmth of their bodies
pulls me tighter to some vivid
different sun, some smaller hour
where even the absent arms
of my mother become nothing
but a flicker of water over dinner
my mother
making buckets out of hospital baths
wash rags out of t-shirts
I remember her
washing her hair last in the shower.